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R E P O R T  
OF  
THE EXAMINATION  
OF  
THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS,  
IN  
THE CITY OF ROXBURY,  
FOR  
THE YEAR 1851.

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ROXBURY:  
NORFOLK COUNTY JOURNAL PRESS.  
THOMAS PRINCE, CITY PRINTER.  
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## CITY OF ROXBURY.

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IN SCHOOL COMMITTEE,

JULY 30th, 1851.

ORDERED—That Messrs. Peirce, Wayland, and Anderson, be appointed the Annual Examining Committee for the Grammar Schools, and Messrs. Shailer, Seaver, Morse, Flint, Foster, and Allen, for the Primary and Intermediate Schools.

DECEMBER 10th, 1851.

Messrs. Peirce, Wayland, and Anderson, submitted Reports upon the condition of the various departments of the Grammar Schools, and Mr. Shailer, the Report upon the condition of the Primary and Intermediate Schools, which Reports were severally read and accepted ; it was therefore—

ORDERED—That two thousand copies be printed and distributed to the citizens, as the Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Roxbury.

JOSHUA SEAVER, *Secretary.*

## REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

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### GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

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THE Committee to whom was assigned the examination of the Grammar Schools, have attended to their duties, and submit the subjoined report.

#### TIME OF EXAMINATION.

It is due, both to the teachers and pupils of the schools, that your Committee should express their convictions in reference to the unfavorableness of the period selected for the Annual Examination.

During the month of August there is almost an entire change throughout the divisions of the schools. The pupils that have been, through the year, in the first division, especially in the Washington School, leave at the close of the Summer term, and with the commencement of the Fall term, a general promotion occurs from the Primary Schools, and through all the sub-divisions of the Grammar Schools. In addition to this, children that have been detained from school through the summer, return again in the fall. The teachers have, therefore, but about three months to train the pupils in their several divisions—too short a period to make any very marked impression upon their progress.

At this time, before the teacher has had sufficient opportunity fully to develop his own system, to correct any bad habits previously acquired, and before the pupil has become thorough in his studies, and confident in his knowledge of the principles involved in his memoriter recitations, the principal examination for the year occurs. The teacher is chagrined by the want of positiveness in the answers of his class, and the pupils are greatly agitated from lack of confidence in themselves.

Your Committee, in their quarterly examinations, during the summer, heard recitations which, for smoothness and thoroughness, far surpassed the performances of classes of the same grade at the late examination. These embarrassments would be obviated could the annual examination occur at the close of the Spring quarter. To such a change, your Committee can see no serious objection, and they would, therefore, recommend that, hereafter, the Annual Examination take place at that time.

#### MANNER OF CONDUCTING THE EXAMINATION.

Your Committee felt it to be very important that they should have a correct standard by which to measure the attainments and progress of our schools,—neither too high nor too low. A recitation might not reach the expectation of the examiner, and yet be fully up to the average of acquirement among children of the same age in other schools. Your Committee, therefore, devoted several days to visiting schools of the same grade in Boston, that they might be better prepared to form a just judgment of the comparative proficiency of our own.

In order that the pupils might be generally measured by the same rule, instead of dividing the work, and visiting the different divisions individually, the Committee remained together in the examination of the upper classes in both schools, and made up their judgment of the proficiency of the scholars, after mutual consultation.

To secure, however, a proper division of labor, it was ar-



ranged that one member of the Committee should give his special attention to the Reading, Spelling, Grammar, &c., another to Mathematics, and the third to Geography, and History. These several reports will appear in their place.

It is proper to remark here, that teachers experience no small amount of embarrassment from the different courses pursued by Examining Committees. One year, the gentlemen holding this office, require a definite and thorough acquaintance with the text-books, and even the very words of their authors—the examination, indeed, exhibiting only the strength and discipline of the child's memory. Another year, the text-book is laid aside, and the child's acquaintance with the principles involved in his year's progress is tested. To secure verbal accuracy, as demanded by the first course, the teacher sometimes sacrifices the most important province of youthful training—the discipline of the whole mind, especially of its reasoning powers.

Your Committee entered the several Divisions of our schools to discover what the children *knew* about the branches of science which they had been pursuing, and not what they *recollected* to have been printed in their books. They wished to see how much the pupils would carry with them from the school, and of how much practical advantage their course of study had been to them. The only reference, therefore, made to text-books, was to learn what had been the field of study for the term, and oral questions were then asked, by the Committee, upon the facts or principles involved in the portion passed over. The classes may not have exhibited as much fluency and ease in their answers, as they would have shown had the other process been pursued, but pupils, teachers and committee had a more truthful view of the actual attainments which had been made, and a clearer exhibition of the exact character of the pupil's deficiency.

The great object of education, beyond the disciplining and strengthening of the mental faculties, is to impress indelibly upon the mind such general truths and principles as will admit of a constant application when the youth leaves his books and commences the active duties of his calling. The

memory of details may fail him, but whatever truths he has fully comprehended in his own mind, and distinctly understood in all their relations, will remain as his permanent mental resources—coming to his aid whenever the proper occasion presents itself.

### GENERAL IMPRESSIONS.

The general appearance of our schools is very gratifying. In visiting other schools, your Committee found teachers and classes that, in some one branch of instruction or acquisition, might take rank higher than our own, but taken as a whole, our schools will not suffer in the comparison, either as to discipline, scholarship, or vivacity, with others in the vicinity. We were favorably impressed with the naturalness and ease generally exhibited both in reading and recitations. The children appear to be happy, improving, respectful in their bearing towards their teachers, and cheerfully submissive to the strict, but not harsh, discipline of the school. We were peculiarly struck with the admirable physical training of the two upper Divisions of the Washington School. The boys pass through a series of calisthenic exercises with the precision of a military drill, affording them, at once, a vigorous muscular exercise, arousing the flagging faculties of the mind, and bringing the whole company of nearly two hundred into a state of absolute order and quietness. It is proper here, also, to express the gratification felt by the Committee in witnessing the public literary exhibition by the first two Divisions of the Dudley School. The recitations of the young ladies, the reading of select pieces, the original compositions and the delightful music, altogether, formed a pleasant episode in the somewhat monotonous labors of examination, and appeared to afford great pleasure to the parents and invited guests who were present.

## FIRST DEPARTMENT.

READING, SPELLING, DEFINING, GRAMMAR, NATURAL  
PHILOSOPHY, AND WRITING.



Having been directed by the Chairman of the "Examining Committee for the Grammar Schools," to give my attention principally to the following branches of study, viz.: Reading, Spelling, Defining, Grammar, Natural Philosophy and Writing, I beg leave to furnish some results of my observation during the Examination of said schools.

In general, I am happy to bear my testimony to the good appearance of the schools in these departments.

In Reading, great pains is evidently taken by the teachers throughout all the Divisions to correct in their pupils wrong pronunciation—scrupulously adhering to the standard adopted by the Committee—and to fix in their minds the indispensable requisite for a good reader, to enunciate clearly the elementary sounds of each word. Like success in these efforts, of course, is not attained in all cases; the result being modified by the skill of the instructor to impart, and the capacity of the scholar to acquire the important lesson. Yet I could not point out, in either the Dudley or Washington school, (I was not present at the examination of the school in Guild Hall,) a single Division that could be considered defective in this respect. As to intonation, I cannot speak with such unqualified approbation. It must, however, be considered, that a correct understanding of the words is necessary, in order to give correct intonation in reading, unless it be learned memoriter from the lips of the teacher, which would be of trifling value. Accordingly, in those Divisions where they do not attend to definition, I passed over, with but slight notice, the matter of intonation. In my opinion, the book that is used as a Reader, in those Divisions, is unfit, in almost every particular, for the place it occupies. In the upper Divisions there was, in many instances, a lack of vivacity, resulting from the pupil's not entering into the spirit of the

piece he or she read, and consequently a tendency to measured cadence, so disagreeable from its monotony. The female voice, more naturally than the male, falls into this defect. I, therefore, notice with great pleasure the exertion that has been made by the teachers of the Dudley school, during the past term, to correct, so far as they have this evil, and to secure the tasteful reading, which, in several instances, was presented to the Committee.

In this connection, I cannot omit to mention with commendation the successful drill of some boys in the First Division of the Washington school in the Exercises of Elocution, which gave a fair promise of accurate and finished public speaking. Probably the Reading of these schools will favorably compare with that of any schools in the Commonwealth.

The Spelling and Defining, were good.

Before leaving this Department of study, I would ask permission to make two or three suggestions.

I would suggest, that defining the lesson should accompany its reading, through all the Divisions of our Grammar schools; then intonation could be intelligibly taught even to the youngest readers, and thus would be avoided many habits that must be unlearned at a later period.

Again, I would recommend, that in the First and Second Divisions of each of the Grammar schools, there be regular exercises as often as twice a week in Phonetic spelling. I look upon this as the surest method of acquiring the distinct enunciation of the elementary sounds of words, without which, it is impossible to become an elegant reader.

One thing more : I would suggest that pains be taken by each Teacher to destroy the traces of foreign accent in any of the scholars, which often furnish, in after life, the only ground of an unnecessary and odious distinction. The cause of the most common peculiarity that we have to contend against, will be found, upon examination, to consist chiefly of a tendency to abrupt guttural sounds, which might be obviated by enforcing the strict observance, by the scholar, of one or two simple rules, without creating any unpleasant notoriety respecting the fault.

In Grammar, were I to say the examination was fair, perhaps I should be according to it all that a candid judgment would allow. The scholars did not appear, in either school, quite so familiar with parsing, as is desirable. The rules and definitions of Grammar seemed accurately committed, but with the application of the same to the structure of sentences, there appeared not to be that familiarity which would have enabled them to parse with promptness and fluency. As, however, when the scholars had been under a longer training of the teachers, they manifested a corresponding proficiency in Grammar, we must conclude, that any deficiency in this department, is attributable to the brief time the classes were under their respective teachers, rather than to a want of skill and attention on the part of the teachers. The annual examination, occurring as it does at the close of the first quarter after promotion, affords an unfair criterion of the schools, and I would therefore direct especial attention to the suggestions of the Committee, which will be found in another part of the report. In the grammatical and logical analyses of sentences, there were, in the first class of the Dudley school, great promptness and accuracy, with apparent thorough knowledge of the principles on which the exercise was based. In the Washington school, the immaturity of the largest part of the class, prevented the examination on this subject from being so highly satisfactory.

In Natural Philosophy, the examination of the Dudley school, on the small portion of the work they had been over, was good, the pupils being able to recite the definitions and principles, and also to illustrate the examples. In the Washington School, the Principal, finding his class behind in some of the elementary studies, very wisely omitted Natural Philosophy for the quarter.

The Writing in both schools cannot be commended too highly. The books, almost without exception, were kept cleanly, and the pages showed great care and diligence in seeking to gain that beautiful accomplishment, an easy and elegant handwriting. In some cases such proficiency was attained as, really, to need no farther improvement.

In the several departments to which I gave my especial attention, as in the others, the examination was conducted with the design of ascertaining not so much what the scholar had *learned* as what he *knew*. Hence, taken away from the helps of a verbal memory, and cast upon the application of principles that had been stored in the mind, the scholar was put to the severest test that could be made to bear upon him, still the Committee felt that it was the only reliable way by which to become informed of the true state of the schools; and it is matter of joy that they have so well answered the expectation formed of them. Could the teacher feel confident that his or her pupils would always be rated by such a standard, and not by mere memoriter recitation, he or she would then, doubtless, be more successful, even than at present, in making thorough scholars, and laying a more abiding foundation for future intelligence.

The exhibition of the highest two divisions of the Dudley school, at the close of the quarter, although perhaps not coming exactly within the province of the Committee, still was so very creditable to all concerned, that a passing recognition of its excellence will be received by the public, as it will surely be given by us, with feelings of pleasure and generous pride. The personal appearance of the scholars, a most important point in a girl's school, was all that the most scrupulous regard to neatness could demand. The various exercises, interspersed as they were with very excellent performances, in both instrumental and vocal music, reflected honor on the proficiency of the scholars, and the assiduity and skill of the teachers, and afforded to the numerous parents and other persons gathered on the occasion, the highest present satisfaction with assurances of future progress. Perhaps the most noticeable excellencies of the exhibition, if we can fix on any for special mention, were the Writing and the Composition,—which I presume have been rarely equalled in any common school.

All of which, I beg most respectfully to submit.

THOS. D. ANDERSON,

*Member of Ex. Committee for Grammar Schools.*

## SECOND DEPARTMENT.

### MATHEMATICS.

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On the subject of Mathematics, the examination has been confined entirely to Arithmetic, from the simplest rudiments, onward to the most difficult problems, that can be solved without the aid of Algebra, which is not studied during so early a part of the year. The method adopted for testing the knowledge of the pupils, and ascertaining how far it was ready, available, and practical, was to lay aside books entirely, and as far as possible, to come to principles, insisting continually upon the pupils using their own language in the answers given, and resorting to their own illustrations; convinced that examples, taken from the book, with which the mind is familiar from frequent inspection and repetition, are apt to be repeated by rote, and in the majority of cases, fail to bring out the idea which they were originally designed to enucleate. Nor did we pursue any regular course, as this would have enabled the successive pupils, to have almost anticipated the inquiry which was to call forth their knowledge and ingenuity. To prevent this, and to place all upon the same level of advantage, we proceeded at one time, from the simpler to the more abstruse parts; at others from the most difficult, to the easiest. In this way, every question came to the mind with such freshness, as to render impossible a mere stereotyped reply, and to show, as the pupil stood before us, what command he had over his attainments, and whether they were only lodged in the memory, or so orderly stored in the understanding, as to be readily accessible, and easily put to use, as the occasion demanded. We also invented questions that seemed to admit of several answers, and left them to the exercise of their own judgment to determine the matter. To any one, at all acquainted with the subject, no argument is necessary to prove that such a course puts the knowledge of a pupil to a severe test,

as to its extent, accuracy, and availableness. And we are happy to say, that the result was, in most cases, such as to gratify the examiners, who do not hesitate to assert, that classes of the same grade, in any of the Boston schools, would not, on the whole, have appeared better. We do not mean to say that there were not decided failures; nor that there were not cases of marked deficiency, which were noted at the time; and are to be accounted for, from causes that do not derogate from the ability and fidelity of the teachers, but which do suggest a very censurable indifference on the part of many parents, especially those of foreign extraction, in carelessly keeping their children away for slight reasons, instead of enforcing that punctual and regular attendance, which is necessary to derive the highest advantage from the schools, whose doors are open to the poorest "without money and without price." This is a topic, on which much might be said, could we hope to reach the ears of those, who are thus allowing their children to lose opportunities of improvement, that can never return. They keep their children away from school, every now and then, a day, or a week, sometimes longer, without thinking of the evil it produces, how it breaks up their habits of study, and discourages them, at finding themselves always inferior to their classmates, who are regular in their attendance. The effect of such absence is particularly unhappy in Mathematics, in which there can be no real advance, while any thing behind remains unmastered. The parents may say that they have a right to keep them away, when they choose. We shall not dispute this. What we are pleading for, is the real interests of their children, to promote which we ask them to co-operate with the teachers and the School Committee.

The general appearance of the pupils, belonging to both of the Grammar Schools, in this part of their examination, was such as, on the whole, to give great pleasure to the examiners, and to deepen within them the conviction, that our public schools are accomplishing their high object with as much success as can reasonably be expected,—that



they are giving a sound common education not only to American children, but also to those who would otherwise grow up in utter and dangerous ignorance ; and that they deserve the continued support, and liberal patronage of this enlightened city.

JNO. WAYLAND.

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### THIRD DEPARTMENT.

#### GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, AND NATURAL HISTORY.

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With a few exceptions, all the classes pursuing these branches reached about the average standard of proficiency in their recitations. The Second Division in the Washington school, perhaps, deserves special reference for its correctness and promptness in Geography. The First Division in this School had not entered upon history ; the boys composing it, not appearing to be sufficiently thorough in the more rudimental studies, the Principal, most judiciously, concluded to devote all the time to a careful drill upon these. We hope he will continue this course with the Division. It is desirable, if it can be attained, that the pupils in the Grammar Schools, before they leave, should have some acquaintance with Natural Philosophy, Book-keeping, Linear-drawing, &c., but it is of far greater moment, that they should be perfect in Reading, Spelling, Defining, Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, and General History, — not merely have a smattering in these branches, but be perfectly at home in them. In reference to Geography and History, especially the former, something evidently is lacking either in the text-book or in the present modes of instruction, or in both ; for it continually occurs, that pupils who have been drilling upon Geography for years, in the Primary, and Grammar Schools, if they have temporally laid it aside for

other studies, or even, are still engaged in its study, break down upon some of the simplest questions, involving the relation of places to each other. They do not lose their knowledge of the Multiplication Table, but this severe acquisition remains with them as a permanent resource. May we not learn something from this? Cannot the youthful mind become so thoroughly invested with the general outlines of Geography, as never to lose its grasp upon them—with the principal features, cities, mountains, rivers, &c., of the various countries upon the globe, as ever to have them in the mind's eye, and to be able to recall, at once, their proper position on the earth's surface, when the name strikes the ear or meets the eye? Geography cannot be studied, to any very great advantage, until the mind of the child is considerably developed—especially its imagination; for upon the strength of this faculty will depend, in a great degree, the correctness of the child's geographical acquisitions. The imagination is not one of the earliest developed faculties. The child's mind is taken up with facts and phenomena. Every sense is assaulted with its appropriate solicitations from the world without, and the latent faculties, aroused by these continued incitements, begin to expand themselves. The memory is, perhaps, one of the earliest powers developed, being continually burdened and therefore strengthened, by the multitude of facts gathered up by the senses. The appropriate studies for a young child, therefore, are those which most address his physical senses, or appeal chiefly to his memory. These are Reading, Spelling, and the simplest combinations of figures. The child may learn the definitions of Geography, and, by oral instruction, may have some general ideas of the earth upon which he lives. This knowledge, however, is much more limited than is generally supposed. The child has not sufficient strength of imagination to project a world before his mind's eye, girdled with arbitrary lines in every direction, suspended in space, and moving upon an imaginary axis. By questioning one of these little Primary School Geographers, we should soon find the character of his acquisitions—everything, with him, will be

actual, not imaginary. The axis will be a real cylinder, on which the earth turns, like a wheel round its axle, while the equator and tropical circles are actual physical belts, or elevations, that gird the earth. He may tell you the capitals of the states, but he will break down in the first steps of his journey, if he attempts to travel from one to another. His time can be better employed in becoming familiar with the arts of Reading, Spelling, and combining figures. Upon these there should be an unremitted drill—the interest of the child being kept up, by the vivacity and tact of the teacher in varying the lessons, and in illustrating them by oral remarks and questions. We do not accomplish anything *perfectly* in the Primary School, because too much is attempted; the mind of the child is burdened, and memory is not sufficiently strengthened by constant repetition.

But when the child's imagination begins to open, and his reasoning powers to struggle to grasp the principles of things, Geography may be profitably introduced. The teacher must now devote no small amount of attention to this important study. He must discover, by constant questionings, whether the youth's impressions are correct. He should move no faster than will consist with his thorough comprehension of the ground he has passed over. To make the study one of the most interesting and enlivening in the whole list of Common School acquisitions, the teacher must be perfectly familiar with every branch of the subject—superficial, physical, political and historical. The office of the text-book should be simply that of a guide to his oral communications, and merely a foundation for the acquisitions of the pupil. Every fact that serves to hold the attention of the child upon any portion of the earth's surface, upon any city, or river, or mountain, will, through the certain action of a law of his being, impress that locality more permanently upon his memory. The power of memory is in exact ratio with the habit of attention. If the child does not fully understand his lesson, if his interest is not sufficiently awakened to restrain the ramblings of his thoughts and to make him a personal spectator of the scenes he describes, his im-

pressions will be altogether indefinite,—he has merely seen “men as trees walking”—and the whole train will pass away from his memory almost as soon as it has swept past his field of vision. By general exercises, often recurring, in which, without previous preparation, the actual attainments of the pupils can be tested; the teacher will discover the deficiencies of his class, and the scholars will be prompted to greater diligence. These may be made the most animating recitations of the school. The whole earth may be compassed, every important city visited, all the prominent historical associations may be suggested to aid and enliven the lagging memory, and Geography, instead of being the dull accumulation of the mere names of countries, cities, rivers, &c., may be invested with much of the charm of an actual tour of observation. Of course, this will lay a heavy demand upon the teacher, but the success of the experiment will amply compensate him for his labor. The exceeding interest of his class, the confidence which they exhibit in their answers, and the permanent accessions they have made to their stock of valuable knowledge, will be an honorable return for all his extra service.

In reference to outline maps, a suggestion may not be out of place. Where quite young children are studying Geography, or are receiving oral lessons from a teacher, an outline map will be of considerable service. And, perhaps, it may be sometimes used among older scholars safely, or even with some advantage. But their constant use can but be injurious. We are aware how tenacious are the laws of habit and association. If we remember a second truth from its connection with a primary, the latter must always be recovered by the memory, before the former can come within the mind's grasp again. If the lawyer is accustomed to have his brief before him, however familiar he may be with his case, he cannot speak to the point without it. We have all heard of the clergyman, who had fallen into the habit of drawing a thread through his fingers while engaged in his public services, and who never failed to lose the *thread* of his discourse, whenever the literal thread un-

happily dropped from his hands. It is this law of our mental being which renders the constant use of the outline maps perilous. We do not carry them with us when we go into the world, and if our knowledge of the relation of places is too closely associated with their suggestions, when we are beyond their aid, we shall be bewildered. The object of a map is to exhibit to the eye the actual relation of places upon the earth; and its usefulness depends upon the daguerreotype counterpart which the imagination receives upon its surface. We want the mind to hold, not an outline map—a surface of blots and lines—but one filled up, with the appropriate names attached. The susceptible mind of youth readily opens to receive these pictorial representations, and, by the constant recurrence of them, they become permanent impressions. If, however, at every recitation, the outline map is unrolled, and by a dot here, and a shore-line there, the memory is aided in its work, it will, at once, rid itself of the more laborious task of preserving a distinct and full recollection of the original map, and lean itself upon the general outlines, continually meeting the eye. Thus, for instance, it occurred in the late examination, that pupils in the upper divisions would fail in some of the most simple questions, involving the relation of places upon the earth, but the moment the outline map was opened, they would, without hesitation, point out the nameless black dots, representing the desired localities. A moment's reflection upon the law of habit, will convince the teacher that such a result is naturally to be expected.

Many of the above suggestions in reference to Geography will apply to History. In this, even more than in Geography, the pupil is accustomed to memorize the exact language of his author, rather than to recast in his own mind the recitals of his text book. The pupil, therefore, only knows of his history what he can repeat verbally, and, as he has learned it in order, by the law of association, he can only repeat what he has learned, in course. This habit, the teacher can, and should, at once correct. By continued reviews upon disconnected portions of the history passed

over, by encouraging the habit of inquiry among the scholars and the practice of reading the small collateral histories to be found in the school library, and, above all, by being himself the living encyclopædia of history, making even the hour of recitation an hour of acquisition, quite a full outline of general history, certainly of the history of his own country, may be brought within the comprehension of a grammar school scholar.

The practical importance of both the above studies and their constant application in every social relation, will be a sufficient apology for the prominence given them in this report.

These suggestions have been occasioned by no marked remissness in our own schools, but have been presented in the hope that a little reflection, in this direction, will enable our intelligent teachers to present, at another examination, classes that may be considered models for their success in mastering these two important branches of knowledge.

The first class of young ladies only, in the Dudley school, have pursued Natural History: they appeared to have a clear apprehension of the portion of this science which they have passed over, and answered very readily the questions proposed by the Committee.

## GENERAL REMARKS.

### DRAWING.

As a majority of the scholars in our Grammar Schools close their rudimental training when they have availed themselves of the opportunities these afford, it is very desirable that they should have some knowledge of the simpler laws of perspective and linear drawing. This will not only be a grace, but a necessity, in after life. As mechanics or merchants, the boys will find a continued demand upon all their skill as draughtsmen, while, in planning the house, and in marking out the garden, as well as securing to herself a constant and grateful recreation in after years, the young lady will have an abundant field for the exercise of all her attainments in this beautiful art. By general exercises upon the black-board, copied upon the slate, or blank-book, sufficient instruction might be given to enable the scholar to acquire adequate skill in the use of the pencil for all practical purposes. More than one good end will be accomplished by such a discipline; the eye will be carefully trained, a valuable habit of observation will be formed, and the mind will be accustomed to a closer attention in its investigations of any object, while the fingers are rendered more flexible to wield the pen, as well as the pencil.

In some of the neighboring schools, visited by your Committee, the pupils had covered several of the black-boards with most admirable exhibitions of their skill in drawing, showing how successfully their æsthetic faculties had been cultivated, while their promptness in the severer sciences, evinced that they had not neglected the more practical qualities of their minds.

### STATISTICS.

	Average number of pupils for the year.	Average daily attendance.	Number present at examination.	Average age.
Washington School,	540	486	480	10 yrs.
Dudley School,	433	360	390	11 1-3.

## NEW GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

With commendable public spirit and liberality, the authorities of the city, have, during the past year, secured the erection of a fine brick edifice in Ward 1, to afford additional accommodations for boys residing in the easterly part of the city. A well situated, and pleasant site has been purchased, affording an ample play ground for the pupils. The building is two stories in height, and contains six rooms, twenty-eight feet square, together with a large hall, suitable for singing and general exercises. Each room is designed to seat comfortably, fifty scholars, and the furniture, embracing all the modern improvements, has been selected with reference to the physical laws of the child, and the best discipline of the school. The whole expense of land, building and furniture, will be about \$20,000. Altogether, it is as neat and convenient a school edifice, as any in our vicinity. Another story, which would render its external appearance much more imposing, can easily be added, when the rapidly increasing population of that portion of our city renders it necessary.

The building will be placed in the hands of the School Committee about the first of January. Should the new district commence at the Boston line on Washington street, follow that street to Warren street, and the latter street to the Dorchester line, embracing the boys of a suitable age residing east of the line, the Washington school, including Miss Harris's Division, would be relieved of two hundred pupils, with which number the new school would go into operation.

With the accessions from the Primary Schools, coming in by the first of February, there will remain in the Washington school, four hundred pupils. The relief afforded by the new district, will allow an economical change in the board of instruction in the Washington school, as well as secure greater facilities for the training and physical comfort of the lower divisions. But one division will be required in the lower rooms, and thus two female assistants can be spared for the new school: and, as the upper divisions will



be smaller, the services of the assistant male teacher, in the first division, may be dispensed with; an usher being appointed to the charge of one of the divisions in the upper room.

In the new building, a principal and three female assistants will be adequate to commence the school. During the year, additional Primary School accommodations may be required, in that part of the city, and one of the vacant rooms might be devoted to this purpose, for the present.

The new building since its plan was proposed, has become, to us, monumental. It bears on its front the honored name of the first officer of our city, at the commencement of our present period of public service. Mayor Dearborn, is no longer with us in person, but the Dearborn School will bear his memory down to the coming generations, for whom, in his public services, he lived and labored.

#### GRADATION IN SALARIES.

The salaries of the female assistants in our Grammar Schools are comparatively small, and it may well be considered by us, whether, in order to secure the first order of talent, (and why should we not have it?) the standard of remuneration ought not to be raised?

There is, indeed, always, a great demand for any offered vacancies, but can we hope to secure the first class of mind, where we fall behind our sister city nearly one hundred dollars per annum, in a female assistant's remuneration? But even if no addition be thought advisable, is it not just that some discrimination should be made between the salary of an assistant who has retained her place for years, and one who has just entered upon her duties, upon trial? During the probationary months, the inexperienced and often unsuccessful teacher, according to the present system, receives the same amount of wages, as the most successful and laborious assistant in the school. Could an addition of twenty-five dollars be made to the salary of those who have been in the school for a year, or more, and who have exhibited an

aptitude for the work, rendering them peculiarly valuable as teachers, it would be at once an incentive to ambition, and a well-earned reward of diligence. It would have a tendency, also, to secure a greater amount of permanency in the office. Many of our divisions have suffered severely, during the past year, from the frequency of the changes, in their instructors.

The teachers on trial might, during this period, be allowed the same compensation as the teachers in Primary Schools, and when confirmed in their appointment, receive the present salary allotted the Grammar School assistants; and after a year's service, should there be a marked improvement and an increased facility in teaching, an additional twenty-five dollars might be added.

The smallness of the remuneration at first, may be thought to be an impediment in the way of securing the services of good teachers, who have had experience in other schools, but the certain advancement of the salary to a more adequate compensation, would be a satisfactory offset to the limited amount received during the months of trial. Certainly, after a teacher has shown the wisdom of her selection, by the experiment of years, has become acquainted with all the demands of her onerous office, and, by earnest endeavors and constant study, raised herself to the continually advancing standard of requirement, it seems but an act of justice, when her services have really become so much more valuable than at first, or than those of any inexperienced substitute, that she should receive some pecuniary consideration for her toil and some significant expression of the public appreciation of her efforts.

There is no province of public labor, in which the sex can acquire greater honor, or perform a higher service for the race, than in the profession of the teacher. Her gentleness, kindness, patience, and mental activity, united with a harmonious development of the moral faculties, render her an admirable companion, guide, and educator, for the young.

But she must be trained to the work; must become a thorough scholar, and a skilful tactician, as well as, an ami-

able and patient disciplinarian. To secure this end, and direct the attention of the most worthy and able minds to the profession, an adequate compensation and encouragement must be offered. It should not be considered, as the female teacher's profession is often looked upon, as the last shelter of orphanage, or the final retreat from the heavy pressure of affliction and poverty, but an honorable and open field for the chastened ambition of any earnest mind, seeking to fill up the measure of an useful and happy life, and to leave an impression for good upon society.

The subject is worthy the consideration of the Board, and to them we leave the elaboration of a plan to meet the object proposed in this part of our report.

#### DISCIPLINE.

One of the most delicate, and yet important offices of the teacher, is to bring his school into a state of perfect, but cheerful, discipline. His discipline is perfect, when he has secured the voluntary obedience of his pupils, and their hearty acquiescence in his plans of study, and laws of order. To attain this, the respect and affection of his pupils, must be won. By the moral dignity of his character, by his superior information, by his self-control and unvarying faithfulness, he must render himself respected by all the members of his school. By his interest in their studies, their persons, and their future well-being; by constant encouragement; by approbation, where diligence is crowned with success, and by expressions of sorrow, rather than anger, when a failure has resulted from neglect, or when punishment has been made necessary by a violated rule of conduct, he must secure for himself a warm place in the susceptible heart of youth. Just in proportion as these ends are gained, will the disciplinary labor of the master be lightened. The administration of corporal punishment may secure the temporary obedience and the servile fear of the child, but it will not quicken his mental faculties, nor prevent another breach of

discipline when the eye of the master is not upon him, and there is a possibility of impunity in transgression.

And just here, may be seen the great importance of teaching the morals, and virtues of the Bible, in our schools—to secure a conscientious and voluntary respect for the right, and an abhorrence of the wrong, whether the eyes of thousands are gazing, or only the Omniscient Eye is looking down upon the heart.

It will always be found that those schools are conducted with the least disciplinary punishment, and exhibit the most cheerful respect towards their instructors, where the most attention is paid to the inculcation of good morals, and virtuous habits; where the moral sense of the scholars is developed, and educated, and loyalty to the order of the school is insisted upon, not merely because it *must* be rendered, but because it is *right*.

An intelligent teacher will have no lack of occasions to secure this moral training. At the opening devotional services of the day, in the ordinary reading lessons, in the records of history, and in nearly every case of the open breach of the school regulations, an opportunity is presented for the rallying of the moral faculties of the pupils, and for making a fresh impression upon their minds, of the nobleness of right-doing, and the sin and results, of the opposite course.

There are those, however, upon whom every other argument fails; it may be through indulgence or severity at home, or through weakness of moral sensibility, or perverse indolence, or wilfulness of mind, the order of the school is continually broken, all appeals to the higher motives prove unavailing: certainly, now, the period has come for the administration of Solomon's discipline, and it may not be safely withheld. This never can, of course, be pleasant to the child: it is intended that physical pain should be induced, that the child may feel a restraining fear of repeating the act of wrong doing.

The general rule in our schools for the administration of corporal punishment is, that it shall be executed by a rattan or rule upon the palm of the hand, and that the head, and any

part of the body where permanent injury may be received, shall never be approached. It is also understood, that corporal punishment is not to be resorted to, until other means of influencing the pupils have failed, and then is to be administered in such a way as to operate on the moral sensibilities of the pupil in the strongest manner. All brutal punishments, such as pulling the hair, or twisting the ears, are strictly forbidden. There may have one or two instances occurred where young teachers, losing their self-control, when irritated by the perverseness and obstinacy of the child, have punished the offender upon the head: this however, has always been understood to be contrary to the rule of the school, the often expressed opinion of the Committee, and to the explicit directions of the principals. Probably, in every case, no one has felt more grief at the occurrence, than the teacher, and ample acknowledgment has been made when the momentary exasperation has worn away. In one case, during the past year, an assistant was peremptorily removed for her neglect of this established law of school discipline.

The statistics of corporal punishment in the Dudley school, last year, show, that while its discipline is commendable for its perfectness, it is not secured by the slavish fear of punishment, but by the moral restraints which have been thrown around the pupil. The corporal punishments for the year have only averaged to one and six-tenths per teacher, for three months. Nine tenths of all the punishments occurred in three of the lower divisions, where frequent changes in instructors have greatly disturbed the discipline of the rooms. In the first and second divisions of the school no corporal punishments occurred during the year.

In the Washington school we have failed to obtain the statistics of corporal punishment, required by the regulations of the school committee. The principal and a few of the assistants have preserved the required record; their reports exhibit but few corporal punishments and the majority of these were slight, the only exceptions appearing to have been instances of incorrigible truancy.

The Committee would feel more confidence in the public assurances they are expected to give, if the regulation of the Board were complied with, and each teacher recorded every case of corporal punishment, with the name of the party, the kind and degree of punishment, and the cause of its infliction.

It is proper, however, to remark, that the only complaints in reference to punishments in this school, during the year, were in the case of the teacher removed by the Committee, and the accidental severity of another, who has since left, in which instance, a satisfactory apology was made to the parent.

But for minor faults, for voluntary tardiness, for indolence, whispering, and failing in lesson, some other devices must be suggested to preserve the tone of the school, and to arouse the lagging faculties of the mind. It has been objected to some of these, that they are demeaning, and serve to break down the self-respect of the child. Now, no punishment can be ennobling. It certainly can be no honor to a child to render itself worthy of a reprimand. The very object of the punishment is to cause a wholesome blush of shame to suffuse the cheek, that its recurrence may be sufficiently dreaded to restrain from the commission again of the misdemeanor. The change of position in the class or in the form, standing erect, the limiting of the recess, tarrying after school, or sitting upon the teacher's platform—these are nearly if not all the punishments administered in our schools. If these were not somewhat humbling, of what would they avail? And if corporal punishment should be the very last resort, what more appropriate intermediate penalties can be devised?

It occurs perhaps in all our families that, at times, the discipline of the school jostles a little our domestic economy. In detaining the child after school, some considerable inconvenience arises in reference to the regular hours for the family meals; or, just at the unfortunate moment when he is detained, the child's services or presence may be wanted at home. All this is inconvenient, but is not the end to be

gained, worthy of all the personal sacrifices it calls for? It is not for the child's injury but for his permanent good, that he thus disciplined; and it is not on his account alone, but for the benefit of others—his classmates—who would be embarrassed by his negligence and waywardness, that he is detained to make up for the time he has squandered in idleness. It can be from no personal unkindness to the pupil, on the part of the master, for oppressed and wearied as he is with the labors of the day, he must suffer himself, the very punishment he administers to the scholar—he must remain to hear the recitation that the pupil carries to prepare.

How can the tone of the school be preserved, and each individual scholar receive all the benefits he should derive from schools supported at so great a public expense, unless the teachers have the power of securing, in some way, the punctual attendance of the scholar, and his studiousness during the limited daily period allotted to his tasks?

There are, however, domestic contingencies that demand the delay or the absence of the child from school. The parent, of course, must decide upon the imperativeness of these calls. It is to be supposed that he will feel the importance of the constant and punctual attendance of his child, and will allow no ordinary occasion to interrupt the regular discharge of his school duties. A written request from a parent, therefore, for the early dismissal of his child, or a written excuse for tardiness must always be respected by the teacher, and save the child from any disciplinary action, save that which necessarily occurs from his loss of time and study. These requests and excuses must be *written*, or too great a temptation would be thrown in the path of the weak, and too favorable an occasion be offered to the wicked, to deceive the teacher and avoid the studies of the school-room. The written certificate is the only safe-guard of the master, it is best for the pupil, and it makes but a slight demand upon the parent.

The relation of the teacher to the pupil, during the period that the child is within the precincts of the school, is parental. He takes the place, and for the time being, assumes the vol-

untarily conceded rights of the parent, subject to the same moral and legal restraints. For all the well-defined purposes of the school, he is to have the entire control, and should secure the perfect obedience of the child. With the studies, and order of the school, the individual parent has no right to interfere : these are established by a legal Committee and the master himself has no power to change them. If the discipline of the school, in the case of his child, seems to be cruel, it is, then, both his duty and his right to demand of the constituted authority, the Committee of the school, a thorough examination of the alleged punishment ; and it scarcely appears possible that a body of gentlemen, the most, if not all, of whom, are parents, and who have no personal relations to the teachers,—whose published rules besides, expressly inhibit all barbarous or even perilous corporal inflictions, would sustain a master in an act of passion, or in any undue assumption of authority.

Should they, from any principle of false sympathy, attempt thus to shield a *real* offender, the law offers redress to the sufferer, and the ballot-box, to an outraged community.

Could parents for a moment, consider how much the public good demands a systematic and thorough discipline in our schools—schools composed of every variety of social and moral character—and how manifestly the progress of their own children depends upon it, they would cheerfully submit to the occasional domestic inconveniences, and not be too eager to receive the, perhaps unintentionally, but naturally, exaggerated accounts of grievances, which the chagrined child may bear home, in the heat, perhaps, of his unsubdued passion.

We are confident, taken as a whole, that as few occasions for irritation, on the part of parents, occur in our school, as ought reasonably to be expected.

B. K. PEIRCE.

*Roxbury, December 10, 1851.*



# REPORT

## OF THE

### PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

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The Committee appointed to examine the Primary Schools, respectfully report, that,

The whole number of Primary Schools now in the city, is twenty-six.

Of these, one is called the Intermediate School, consisting of an average number of one hundred boys, in two Divisions of fifty each, who are too old to be in the Primary Schools, and too backward to enter the Grammar School. And eleven are denominated Sub-Primary Schools.

The Committee have embodied the result of their Examination as to their estimate of the character of the different schools and their relative standing in the Tabular Abstract, which is subjoined.

The schools stand numbered in the Table as they did before the schools of West Roxbury were separated from them.

The Committee were not able to be together in the examination of all the Schools, but from consultation endeavored as near as possible to obtain the same standard of estimation from which they would mark the character of the several departments of the different schools.

To represent those departments in the schools which were very highly satisfactory, they use the mark Ex. (excellent.) For those very satisfactory, V. G., (very good.) For those satisfactory, G., (good.) For those unsatisfactory, M., (moderate.) For those not to be tolerated, D., (deficient.)

Their estimate is founded mostly on the Annual Examination, but has also some reference to the character of the

schools as observed through the year. They are aware, after all their care to do justice and represent the schools fairly as to relative standing, of their liability, in some cases, to misrepresent.

It sometimes happens that the deportment or the exercises at an examination, give quite too favorable impression of the real character, or it may be the reverse, as we feel confident was the case with some, for instance, in Spelling. If the marks had accorded strictly with the character of the efforts at the examination, they would have been marked D., instead of G., but circumstances and previous observation upon their character in that respect, led us to make the higher mark, as the one fitly representing the standing.

A practiced observer can generally judge what is accidental and what is the real condition, and it is hoped that our Table which gives the sum of our report, is in a high degree just.

It will be observed that School, No. 24, at the Alms-House, is not fully carried out in the Table. It is because of its unsettled state, having recently changed from one place to another. We have confidence in the Teacher, and have no doubt, that, if circumstances were favorable, the school would, as it has heretofore, stand comparatively well.

There are some things which the Committee regard as of great importance which do not appear in the Table. Among these, Oral Instruction is prominent. This has great value in our Primary Schools. The Committee were especially pleased with Schools, Nos. 14, 17, 23 and 31, in this respect. The teachers had evidently taken pains to impart valuable and varied information by a system of Oral instruction which awakened the interest of their pupils and gave to their school exercises an increased charm.

Others have more or less attended to it, and we would especially commend it as admirably adapted to break the monotony of the daily task for the teachers, and to stimulate the intellectual activity and interest of the pupils and keep them from wearying from an endless round with the books merely. We are aware that it requires some thought and invention on the part of the teacher to carry on and vary

such exercises, but her own interest and the profit of the school are so much in it that we strongly commend it.

The Committee were highly gratified with the singing of the scholars in several of the schools. Nos. 19, 21, and 22, may be named among those which excel in singing. The genial influence upon the children, of a few minutes spent in singing every day, in addition to the propriety of commencing early to cultivate the musical powers, makes singing in our Primary schools desirable.

A word upon Spelling. Spelling is, perhaps, the important thing in our Primary schools. Other things can be easier gained in our higher schools. But the *child* must learn to spell, or, it is probable he will never become a good speller. In our language, although it is subject to some rules, spelling is very much a thing of the memory, and the child, at his starting with education, must give particular attention to it, and continue this *prominent* attention, until he knows how to spell the words which we use. Two or three of our Primary school teachers are not perfect spellers, as is evident from their Quarterly returns, but this, perhaps, does not prevent their being thorough teachers of spelling; and it is the special desire of the Committee, that all should be thorough in this branch of instruction. In our examinations, the fault of not pronouncing every syllable as it was spelled, to the last syllable, and then the whole word, was noticed, in many of the schools. They feel it duty to exact this, and cannot call that good spelling, which, merely calls the letters of the word, and does not pronounce each of its separate syllables.

The Committee noticed considerable diversity in the schools, in their attention to the little things which give the finishing grace to good order,—such as having their hats and over-garments each carefully hung in their owner's place,—the appearance and arrangement of the books in the rack—a regular system and careful stillness in going from their seats to the position for recitation, with their hands and books in their appropriate position, and all in uniformity. It is not so much stiff stillness, as easy and ready obedience to the

wholesome rules of the teacher, which she rigidly and absolutely requires, that constitutes good order.

The amount of tardiness and absence of the scholars, enters, also, as an element of the order of the school. A teacher of thorough interest in her work, and who secures an affectionate obedience, will reduce very much the tardiness and absence of her scholars.

The Committee, in their observations, were made quite sensible of the laborious task of many of our Primary school teachers, especially of the teachers in the Intermediate school, which is crowded with boys of different ages and habits, and has not good conveniences for making a school of two divisions so large, agreeable. The teachers are worthy of commendation, for their industry and success, and we should be glad to see the opportunity of improving the conveniences of their room, in order that they might have every facility for accomplishing their task, which they already do so well.

It is, indeed, with pleasure that we take a general survey of our Primary schools, believing that they compare favorably with our schools in former years, and with any other schools of their class.

The Committee might well speak a word of reproof to themselves and their associates, for not having given that frequent attention to the schools during the year which is desirable, both for the encouragement of the teachers and the improvement of the schools.

If this were the place, a reference might be made to the improvement needed in some of our school-houses, and the necessity of having one or more houses built immediately for the accommodation of our children. But this will be presented more effectively at some other time and urged upon the attention of the City Government.

J. S. SHAILER, JOSHUA SEAVER, H. G. MORSE, J. S. FLINT, C. F. FOSTER, IRA ALLEN.	}	<i>Committee.</i>
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# Tabular View of the results of the Annual Examination of the Primary and Intermediate Schools,

DECEMBER, 1851.

No. of School.		Location.		Teacher's Name.		Reading.		Spelling.		Arithmetic.		Geography.		Department.		Average Age.		No. present at examination.		Av. No. belonging for the year.		Average daily attendance.		No. of visits of Committee.	





